

The only thing you can say today, Mr. Trump, is that you are committed to an emergency both for Hurricane disasters and others, but as well as the opioid crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD my letter to the President:

Mr. President, thank you for the invitation for Members of Congress to attend the unveiling of your emergency declaration on combatting the opioid epidemic.

This is indeed an epidemic that I agree must be addressed immediately. This problem has claimed many lives throughout our country, including my state of Texas and my home district of Houston.

It is imperative that we act. It is equally imperative that we act responsibly and intelligently.

We cannot merely make promises on which the American people are waiting for us to deliver, if we know that those promises will not come right away.

We must have a clear goal and long-term commitment to truly combatting this devastating problem in the opioid crisis.

Mr. President, where will this money come from, as this is a very costly endeavor?

New funding streams would be required, and thus, making such a declaration without forethought relative to significant funding will prove to be a futile effort.

There must be a strategy which we can realistically and effectively execute without causing harm to equally important and urgent areas.

Despite your previous promise to address the opioid crisis, at a Commission meeting last week, no real solution was developed.

Instead, the Commission suggested that funding be taken out of the Public Health Service Act or the Stafford Act, both of which are problematic.

First, I believe the nation's public health emergency fund is empty.

Second, the Stafford Act funds disaster relief for hurricanes and wildfires, which are under the jurisdiction of FEMA.

As a Member of Congress that recently watched the fatal devastation inflicted upon my city of Houston, I can tell you firsthand, that we are still trying to wrap our minds around the catastrophic loss and how to now rebuild.

America has experienced mass casualties due to recent hurricanes that occurred within the span of a month period, with approximate death tolls of 82 in Texas and Louisiana, 72 in Florida, 51 in Puerto Rico and countless disruptions and damages.

The loss of lives, businesses and properties is astronomical as we continue to assess the damage in TX, LA, FL, VI and P.R.

Therefore, I must caution the administration, to responsibly bear these facts in mind, as it attempts to combat the opioid epidemic, which is undoubtedly a very important issue.

#### THE 71ST RESCUE SQUADRON IS RECOGNIZED FOR ITS RESCUE EFFORTS

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 71st

Rescue Squadron of the United States Air Force, which is stationed at Moody Air Force Base in the first District of Georgia.

They responded as part of the 23rd Wing effort by mobilizing their personnel and equipment in order to help the victims of Hurricane Harvey in Texas.

The 71st Rescue Squadron successfully evacuated 308 flood victims and 38 family pets. They repositioned 15 rescue crafts and teams to access difficult areas, saving 1,100 lives.

In addition, they moved 83 tons of cargo and delivered 23,000 gallons of fuel, which was used to conduct helicopter search and rescues.

Because of their dedication to this country, this group received the That Others May Live Squadron of the Year Award for the Air Force.

Thank you, 71st Rescue Squadron, for your extensive efforts to help the citizens of this country.

#### HANNAH AHLERS WAS THE "COOL" MOM

(Mr. KIHUEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIHUEN. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a couple of weeks ago, I plan to speak on this floor about each victim who lost their life during the terrible shooting on October 1 in Las Vegas. My goal is to honor their lives and to ensure that they will never be forgotten.

Today I rise to remember Hannah Ahlers, a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend, whose life was taken far too soon.

Hannah lived in Beaumont, California, and had traveled to Las Vegas with her husband, Brian, and three other couples to attend the Route 91 Harvest music festival.

Friends and family have described Hannah as a beautiful person inside and out, who was full of joy, and always went out of her way to help her friends and family.

Her commitment to her friends, family, and community was felt by everyone. She could light up the room at any moment she walked in. Her father-in-law described her as a young Mary Tyler Moore.

She was also an amazing and devoted mother to her three children, Briannah, Brice, and Hailey. Her kids' friends thought she was the cool mom, and they loved to be around her. She lived her life to the fullest, and enjoyed both the simple pleasures and outdoor thrills, like the skydiving community she was a part of.

I would like to extend my deepest condolences to Hannah's friends and family. Please know that the city of Las Vegas in Nevada and the whole country grieve with you. This is a tragedy that should have never happened.

#### OFFICER CRAIG LEHNER LIVED A LIFE OF HEROISM

(Mr. COLLINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Craig Lehner, a Buffalo police officer who lived a life of heroism and who tragically died during a recent training exercise on the Niagara River.

Officer Lehner was a 9-year veteran of the Buffalo Police Department, serving on the underwater recovery team, and also serving as a K-9 officer. His partner, a 4-year-old German Shepherd named Shield, served alongside him.

Officer Lehner served our country for 16 years as an Army National Guard military police officer. Having served in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay, he was a well-decorated staff sergeant, awarded more than a dozen medals for his bravery and military achievements.

Officer Lehner made the ultimate sacrifice, and we will be forever grateful for his service. He will be remembered for his bravery and keeping Americans safe both abroad and in western New York.

I offer condolences to his mother, Kathleen, and all of his surviving family during this very difficult time.

#### HONORING BERTHA WATSON HENRY

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and esteemed career of Broward County Administrator Bertha Watson Henry.

This week, Bertha is being honored at the International City and County Management Association's annual conference in San Antonio as the recipient of the Mark E. Keane Memorial Award for Excellence. I could not think of a more deserving recipient for this prestigious award.

Under Henry's leadership, Broward County successfully navigated the 2008 recession with stable finances and a strong recovery. She has helped Broward maintain a triple A bond rating since 2014, something only three other Florida counties have accomplished.

She has led construction of a new 714,000-square-foot county courthouse, a 40,000-square-foot animal adoption center, and she renegotiated financial agreements to protect Broward's interest in the fourth largest National Hockey League venue in the U.S.

Administrator Henry's recognition at ICMA is also historic, as Bertha is the first-ever African-American woman to receive the Keane Award for Excellence. Most importantly, this achievement is a reflection of Bertha's commitment to her neighbors, the 1.9 million Floridians who called Broward County home.